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EXAMINER

SWINEHART, EDWIN L

ART UNIT

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3617

MAIL DATE

DELIVERY MODE

06/16/2008

PAPER

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.



### DETAILED ACTION

1. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 2 is unclear, as the relationship between “a plurality of ribs” to those previously recited is unclear.

3. The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

4. Claims 1-10 and 18-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention. Claims 1 and 18 as amended are directed towards New Matter Specifically, no basis exists for claiming “at least three ribs”. Applicant discloses “at least one”, and illustrates three ribs, however the claims as now presented set forth three or more, and basis does not exist in the disclosure as originally filed for more than three ribs. Such is New Matter.

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 18-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Abbenhouse et al. .

Abbenhouse et al. discloses a fiber reinforced composite paddle blade having a “skeleton” **75** with two ribs extending towards the outer periphery, and ending substantially at the periphery as claimed. The skeleton, being of a single piece of foam, is covered top and bottom by a composite skin, and attached to shaft as claimed. The rib may be said to include the form **75**, therefore, rib and blade are made of different materials as claimed. Abbenhouse et al. fails to show three or more ribs as now claimed.

Abbenhouse et al. sets forth no criticality for having only two ribs, and therefore it is considered to have been an obvious design expedient to the ordinary routineer working in the art at the time of the invention to provide as many such ribs as desired, for example four. Such would have provided the routineer with exactly the results as would be expected.

Re “injection molding”, such is method of making, which is accorded no weight in these apparatus claims.

7. Claims 1-6,9,10 and 18-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Abbenhouse et al. in view of Sweetland.

Abbenhouse et al. discloses an inner “skeleton” **75** covered top and bottom by a composite skin, and attached to shaft as claimed. Abbenhouse et al. fails to show a grip as is old and well known in the art.

Sweetland shows the field of the invention, including a reduced diameter cylindrical portion **62**, which longitudinally locks a grip therein. Sweetland teaches provision of holes **30** within the handle of the figure 3 embodiment for cooperating with formed “ridges” to secure the handle.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to provide Abbenhouse et al. a grip as taught by Sweetland.

Such a combination would have been desirable at the time of the invention so as to provide a sure grip for the user.

Re “injection molded”, such is method of making, carrying no weight in the claims.

The exact plastic used in the construction is considered to have been an obvious design consideration, providing exactly the results as would be expected. The routineer working in the art would have knowledge of available plastics and their properties, and to choose and substitute known materials to achieve predictable results would not be patentable.

Re “wing shaped”, such fails to define any specific structure and/or arrangement so as to define over Abbenhouse et al.

Re “at least one rib that extends distally from the longitudinal centerline...”, such fails to define over Abbenhouse, and the illustrated ribs are distant from the centerline, and extend towards the outer periphery.

8. Claims 7 and 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Abbenhouse et al. in view of Sweetland as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Bruce.

Bruce teaches a bent shaft.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to provide bent shaft portions to Abbenhouse as taught by Bruce.

Such a combination would have been desirable at the time the invention was made so as to provide a more ergonomic shape.

9. Applicant's arguments filed 3/5/2008 have been fully considered but are not deemed persuasive.

Applicant argues that Abbenhouse et al. fails to show the one piece skeleton as now claimed, having at least three ribs, nor the injection molding of the blade directly around and enclosing the one piece skeleton.

The examiner does not agree, in that Abbenhouse et al. provides a one piece skeleton, just as in the present invention. Specifically, the molded foam core **75** is a one piece skeleton as claimed. It is placed in a mold and the blade is formed therearound, as in the present invention. The claimed process of injection molding carries no weight in the apparatus claims.

10. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

11. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ed Swinehart whose telephone number is 571-272-6688. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Thursday 6:30 am to 2:00 pm..

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Samuel Morano can be reached on 571-272-6684. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Ed Swinehart/  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 3617